Assisting Hands® Home Care

Hand in Hand

eNewsletter

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MARCH/APRIL 2022



The *healthy benefits* of reading a book

Grab a book and fasten your seatbelt. Books are powerful. They're our passport to virtually anywhere in the world, or out of this world! We can explore a distant galaxy, relive history, or leap into the future. A good book can enlighten, lift our spirits, and spark our imagination. Now that really *is* powerful. But there's even more.

Books are essential to keeping us sharp, especially as we age. It's not just a way to transport us to another time or place, there are *proven* health benefits. Reading is a brain-challenging activity. It offers mental stimulation and can improve overall concentration levels. People who read are constantly learning new things. That increase in knowledge helps give the brain the workout it needs. Studies have shown reading can be helpful in delaying the onset of dementia for this very reason.

If you're feeling anxiety or stress, getting caught up in a good read can help you forget about your troubles for awhile. This is important because stress is directly linked to negative behaviors such as overeating, smoking, and excessive drinking.

Reading a book is a sure way to help improve your memory. When a person retires and leaves the working world behind, it can be easy to slip into routines that include watching TV. But reading, well, that requires focus to remember the details of the story that makes it all come together. That type of recall works to improve our overall memory.

Reading can also provide an opportunity to connect with others. Seniors who read may enjoy participating in a book club. Many libraries, bookstores, and senior centers have clubs for readers of all ages - either in person or on-

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line. It's a great way to meet new people and gather for an intellectual discussion and others' views on a great book.

If you're experiencing vision problems that make reading not as enjoyable, there are numerous options that make reading accessible. Large print books, or e-readers such as Kindle or iPad with the print size adjusted to your comfort level are great alternatives. Better yet, close your eyes and listen to someone reading to you on an audio book or Amazon audible. There are countless free titles available.



No matter how you choose to enjoy reading, the important this is, to do it. Whether you're relaxing in your easy chair, waiting for an appointment, or getting ready to turn out the light, reading offers you education, entertainment, and relaxation in one perfect package. After all, who hasn't fallen asleep with a good book? Happy reading!

Recommended Reads...

The Nightingale by Kristin Hanna - This World War II drama brings history to life through the eyes of two sisters.

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot - Non-fiction work that chronicles the medical journey of Henrietta Lack, a poor tobacco farmer whose cells were taken without her knowledge.

The Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides - This murder mystery will keep you on the edge of your seat.

The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared by Jonas Jonasson - Awaiting his 100th birthday party, Allan Karlsson decides to make a run for it!

Prime of Life by P.D. Bekendam - A story about a janitor in a retirement home hides his past life: when he was a cardiothoracic surgeon.

The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway - This classic, worthy of reading again, tells the tale of an old Cuban fisherman and his relentless, agonizing battle with a giant marlin.

April is Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month

Tips to help those living with Parkinson's Disease

April is National Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month. Parkinson's Disease is a lifelong, neurodegenerative disease – meaning that symptoms will slowly worsen over time. The condition causes tremors, gait and balance issues, limb stiffness, and slowing of movements. Parkinson's disease can manifest itself in the form of non-motor symptoms such as pain, short-term memory loss, depression, dementia, fatigue, sleep issues, digestive problems, loss of self-esteem, and stress, as well.

Parkinson's affects everyone differently. If you or someone you know has Parkinson's, there are a number of habits to make part of a daily routine that may help deal with symptoms, and therefore live life more fully.

Exercising by moving and stretching our bodies as much as possible every day is a great habit for everyone to incorporate into their routine. When you're living with Parkinson's, the benefits become invaluable. Moving your body can help improve your flexibility, give you better balance, improve your coordination, and strengthen your muscles. Exercise can also improve your mind by making you less anxious, and easing symptoms of depression. As with any tip mentioned here, talk to your doctor before you begin to discuss which activities may be best for you. You may want to try walking, swimming, water aerobics, gardening, dancing, or Tai Chi.

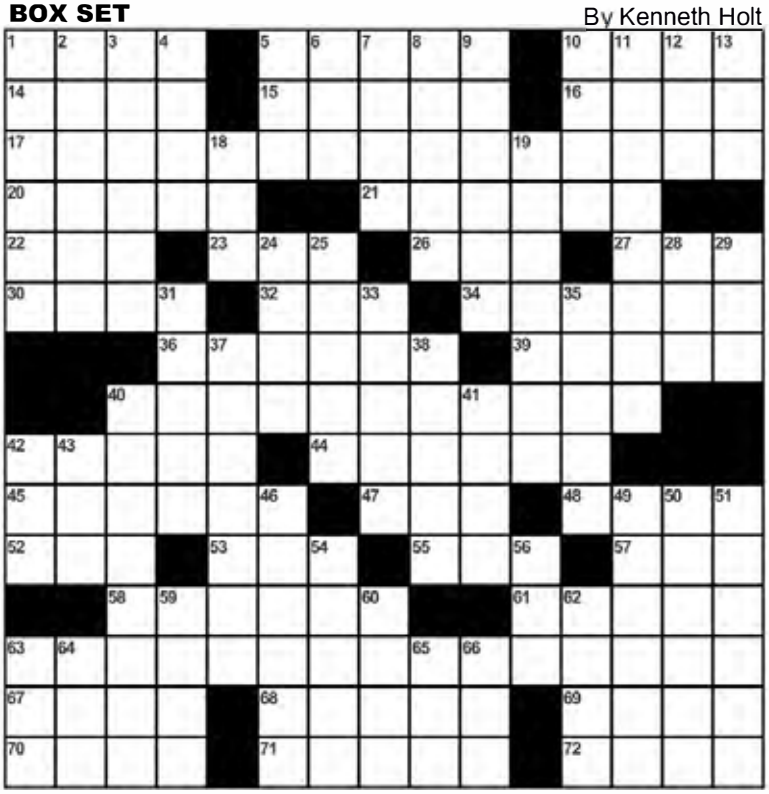
Be aware of possible fall risks. Balance is a real concern when you're living with Parkinson's. As you move around, especially during exercise, use extra caution. Make sure there is nothing on the floor that could get under foot. Plant your heel first when you take a step, and try not to

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move too quickly. Don't carry items while you walk. If you do find yourself unsteady on your feet, or even falling frequently, talk to your doctor or physical therapist about using a cane, walker, or other device to help you move about more safely.

Just for FUN

BOX SET By Kenneth Holt



ACROSS

1) Carplike fish
5) Hired thugs
10) Recipe meas.
14) Primo rating
15) Judging group
16) Miscellaneous medley
17) Knocked out
20) Crumble to the sea, as shoreline
21) Tiger's rival, sometimes
22) Cigarette ingredient
23) "Good ___!" (praise for a batter)
26) "Yuck!"
27) Org. of Wizards and Warriors
30) Lip-___ (mouth the words)
32) Letters on an ambulance
34) Light-headed?
36) Have great respect for
39) "___ on a true story"
40) Throwing a match, in the ring
42) Iranian language
44) Give, as blood
45) Raises cattle
47) Game, ___ and match
48) Cleaning cloths
52) Drink refresher
53) Letters on a tachometer
55) Amniotic ___
57) '60s war zone, informally
58) Faunas' kin
61) What cats and rats do?
63) Give up
67) Flue dirt
68) Guided trips
69) Bulb measure
70) Identifies
71) "Forest and Dove" painter Max
72) Caustic materials

DOWN

1) Middies' opponents
2) Hip appendage?
3) Like new clothes on the rack
4) Assume a stooped posture
5) Where IRS forms are made
6) Small-boat mover
7) Not fooled by
8) 1960s jacket eponym
9) Santa's vehicle
10) Hammer, for one
11) Puritanical person
12) What God says not to do
13) It may call the kettle black
18) Professional payment
19) Share an apartment
24) Bigfoot's cousin
25) Correct a manuscript
28) Buzzing insect
29) Stick in
31) Stop
33) Lily family members
35) Four-time Wimbledon champ Rod
37) Hard-luck area
38) Currycombs comb them
40) Arboreal amphibian
41) Computer input or output
42) "Most Wanted" org.
43) Rainbow, e.g.
46) Elfish one
49) "As I was saying ..."
50) Reproductive cell
51) Runs a blast furnace
54) Bruce Wayne's home, for one
56) Old PC display part
59) Land parcels
60) Take aback
62) Wolf's wail
63) Little sister of 10-Across
64) Unharden a garden
65) Stats for sluggers (Abbr.)
66) Fish story suffix?

–courtesy of freedailycrosswords.com

Make sure you get enough sleep. Sleep issues often plague those with Parkinson's. Insomnia and abnormal dreams are common. Sleeping and resting our bodies (and minds) is important for overall health and well-being. This may take a little discipline, but stick to a schedule and go to bed and wake up at the same time each day. Create a relaxing pre-bedtime routine and stick to it, including turning the TV or computer screens off at least an hour before bed. Also stay away from caffeine, alcohol and exercise for at least 4 hours before you turn in. If you find yourself in need of an afternoon nap, keep it to 40 minutes or less.

Eat for your health. Dehydration, weight loss, and constipation are all symptoms people living with Parkinson's have to deal with. Help keep these symptoms at bay by keeping a close watch on your nutrition. Fuel your body with a variety of whole grains, vegetables, and fruits every day. Limit the amount of fats (especially saturated) that you take in, as well as refined sugars, salt and sodium. Unless restricted, drink at least 8 glasses of water per day, and go easy on the alcohol.

Most importantly: Seek help if you need it. Assisting Hands® Home Care understands how difficult living well with Parkinson's can be for clients and their family caregivers. We have skilled and compassionate home caregivers who can help them through the routine of daily living. The goal is to help you or your loved one regain a sense of control and improve the quality of life.



SWEET & STICKY TOFU WITH BABY BOK CHOY

Prep Time: 20 mins; ***Serves:*** 4

Ingredients

- 12 oz. udon noodles
- 2 tbsp. reduced sodium soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp. plus 1 tsp cornstarch, divided
- 14 oz. firm tofu
- 3 tbsp. canola oil
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced, plus more for garnish
- 1" piece ginger, peeled and cut into matchsticks
- 1/2 small red chile, thinly sliced
- 2 bunches baby bok choy, stems sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped

Directions

- Cook the udon noodles according to package directions.
- Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the soy sauce, sugar, pepper, 1 teaspoon cornstarch and 1/4 cup water until smooth.
- Lightly press the tofu with paper towels to remove excess liquid. Cut into 3/4-inch pieces and toss in the remaining 2 tablespoons cornstarch.
- Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons oil and then the tofu and cook until golden brown on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes total. Transfer to a plate and wipe out the skillet.
- Add the remaining tablespoon oil to the pan and cook scallions, the ginger, garlic and 1/2 of the red chili for 1 minute. Add bok choy; cook, tossing, for 2 minutes.
- Return the tofu to the pan, toss to combine, then add the soy sauce mixture and let simmer, tossing everything together to make a sticky sauce, 1 to 2 minutes.
- Spoon over the noodles and top with the scallions and remaining red chile. Sprinkle with the peanuts.

– courtesy of goodhousekeeping.com



RHUBARB CUSTARD CAKE

- 4 Tbsp. melted unsalted butter, cooled, plus more room-temperature for pan
- 1 cup all-purpose flour, plus more for pan
- ¾ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 2 large eggs
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1½ cups sugar, plus more for sprinkling
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 2 Tbsp. dark rum
- 2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- 13 oz. rhubarb stalks, halved lengthwise if thick

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: A 9" diameter spring form pan

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350°. Butter and flour pan. Whisk baking powder, salt, and 1 cup all-purpose flour in a medium bowl. Whisk eggs, egg yolk, and 1½ cups sugar in a large bowl until very pale and thick, about 1 minute. Whisk melted butter, sour cream, rum, and lemon zest in a small bowl. Whisk butter mixture into egg mixture just to combine. Add dry ingredients and fold in until batter is smooth; scrape into prepared pan. Chill 10 minutes to let batter set.
- Arrange rhubarb over batter however you like, trimming as needed. Don't press fruit into batter—just place over top and let it rest on the surface. Sprinkle with more sugar and bake until cake is golden on top and browned around the sides, 45–55 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack and let cake cool in pan 10 minutes. Slide a knife around sides of cake to loosen and unmold. Slide directly onto rack and let cool completely.

– courtesy of bonappetit.com

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